

2014 Annual Report to the Community



Downers Grove Grade School District 58

We Envision. We Seek. We Believe.

Find us online:



Follow District 58 on Twitter:
www.twitter.com/DGDistrict58

"Like" District 58 on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/district58



Subscribe to our YouTube channel:
www.youtube.com/DownersGrove58

Visit our website: www.dg58.org



Sign up for our
Communicate 58 e-news-
letter via our website!

Dear District 58 Community Member,



Downers Grove was recently named one of the Top Places in the United States to Raise Children and One of the Friendliest Places to live. These accolades could not be more true! Downers Grove Grade School District 58 is very fortunate to benefit from a wonderfully engaged community, supportive parents, incredibly dedicated and inspiring teachers and staff, and, most importantly, truly outstanding students. We are very proud to be an integral part of what makes Downers Grove a wonderful place to live, work and raise a family.

District 58's unwavering commitment to keeping kids first in all that we do guides us as we infuse excellence throughout our schools. With the support of our staff, parents and community, we are able to live our mission of preparing all students to be lifelong learners and contributing members of a global society by challenging and engaging each child with high quality educational programs in a safe, nurturing and child-centered environment.

Our district's vision and strategic plan align to envision classrooms that inspire children, spark creative and innovative thinking, celebrate diversity, and build visionaries through educational experiences that excite minds, touch spirits, challenges abilities and prepare our children for life. The projects and initiatives undertaken in the 2013-14 school year reflect this vision. During this school year we have strengthened our inquiry-based approach to learning by enriching our mathematics, language arts, science and technology curricula in ways that allow for even greater academic challenge, individualization and differentiation. Student engagement and innovative instructional practices have been enhanced through expansion of our 1:1 program, various program evaluations and improvement efforts, and ongoing professional development for our staff. We are proud to have received national recognition for our efforts and approach to social-emotional learning, and the substantial capital improvements accomplished last summer and this school year throughout our district have helped to ensure our facilities provide safe, welcoming, positive environments that ignite and enhance student learning. All of this has been accomplished while sustaining our fiscal integrity via a balanced budget and careful financial planning.

We have much to be proud of in District 58, and we are pleased to share with you a glimpse into the many accomplishments of our school community in this annual report. Not a day goes by that I do not encounter individuals who are passionate about helping us accomplish our vision of inspiring children, sparking creativity and innovative thinking, and building visionaries who accomplish greatness in their classrooms, throughout their community and in their lives after graduation. Thank you to the many, many individuals who help to make these accomplishments possible.

Kari Cremascoli, Ph.D.

Superintendent of Schools,
Downers Grove Grade School District 58

Conversations with Dr. C.

Throughout this school year, Dr. Cremascoli has visited with students throughout the district to discover and learn more about their journey of learning and growth. Our students have much to share, and it is a joy to hear their perspective on the many exciting things going on in our schools! Of course, as so often happens with children who truly do "say the darnedest things," there are some incredibly funny and lighthearted moments. Click the QR code here or visit our YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/DownersGrove58, to check out our Conversations with Dr. C. video series, which offers a peek into the lives of our students while spotlighting some of the more whimsical aspects of these conversations!



Our Mission

The mission of District 58, in partnership with parents and community, is to challenge and engage each child by providing quality educational programs and support services in a safe, nurturing, and child-centered environment in order to prepare all students to be lifelong learners and contributing members of a global society.



Our Vision

We Envision a school district that inspires children, sparks creative and innovative thinking, celebrates diversity, and builds visionaries.

We Seek an education that excites minds, touches spirits, challenges abilities, and prepares our children for life.

We Believe every child should be expected to grow, stretch, evolve and embrace the challenges of the future in a global environment.

Our Core Beliefs

- Each student is capable of learning and deserves to be educated and challenged to reach his/her highest potential.
- Education is the foundation for success, both in academic achievement and social emotional development.
- Within each child, we will cultivate the social awareness, self-management, and responsible decision-making skills necessary to be a contributing member of society.
- Educators, students, families, and community members should work together to support the healthy development of all students.
- The school environment should be stimulating and engaging, with opportunities for creative, collaborative, and meaningful learning experiences.
- The school environment should be safe, friendly, and nurturing, where everyone comes to learn, grow, and develop.

The District 58 Board of Education:

- Sallie Lupescu**, President
- John Cooper**, Vice President
- Elizabeth Davis**
- Roberta Diehl**
- John Miller**
- James Paul**
- Doug Purcell**

Detailed information about the Board of Education, including meeting dates, committee descriptions, policies, meeting minutes and member biographies and photos, is available at www.dg58.org. Board meetings and workshops also are recorded and uploaded as streaming audio files, and posted on the District 58 website.



District 58 at a glance

Downers Grove Grade School District 58 serves approximately 5,000 preschool through eighth grade students from Downers Grove and portions of Darien, Oak Brook, Westmont and Woodridge, in its 11 elementary schools and two middle schools.

- Administrative Service Center
1860 63rd Street, Downers Grove
(630) 719-5800
- Kari Cremascoli, Ph.D., Superintendent
- Jayne Yudzentis, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent for Personnel
- Jessica Stewart, Assistant Superintendent for Special Services
- James Popernik, Ed.D., Controller
- Lorie Pilster, Director of Business Services

- Longfellow Center
1435 Prairie Avenue, Downers Grove
(630) 719-5867
- Matt Rich, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
- James Eichmiller, Director of Innovative Technology and Learning
- Rick Bubula, Director of Buildings and Grounds
- Ken Young, Supervisor of Maintenance

District 58 enjoys successful 1:1 pilot, expanding program for 2014-15

District 58 students and staff have been on an amazing journey of learning this school year, and we are excited about taking the next steps.

This year at least two grade levels at each elementary building, a total of approximately 1,500 students, participated in our 1:1 pilot program in which they were provided with a device to use throughout the day and take home in the evenings. We have seen positive gains in a variety of measures, including student collaboration, ownership and engagement; staff flexibility and choice in meeting learning and curriculum objectives; and student academic growth.

Next year we will increase the number of K-7 students participating in the 1:1 tablet program to 3,600, with an emphasis on the participation of third through seventh grade students. All current grade levels participating at each building, as well as all current participating students, will continue with the program next year. Additionally, teachers from other grade levels who were not already scheduled to participate in the 1:1 program next year through the roll-up plan had the opportunity to apply to participate next year through the challenge-by-choice application.

For the full list of participating grades for 2014-15, visit www.dg58.org/1to1.

Our tablet expansion next year will provide enough tablets and existing laptop devices in each school for all students within any of the District 58 schools to be fully 1:1 at any given time, allowing all students and staff access to digital resources.

We also will continue the District's highly successful Learning Lab program, which provides a take home device for one unit of study to all students in a class that is not participating in the 1:1 program for the year. This allows teachers and students to experience and practice with the 1:1 workflow and teaching/learning within a 1:1 environment.

The District is able to continue funding the 1:1 program without expanding the technology or curriculum budgets. The plan calls for purchasing 450 additional devices (about \$180,000) from the remaining 2013-14 budget, and purchasing another 1,650 devices (about \$660,000) out of the 2014-15 budget. In the future, an additional 1,000 devices (\$400,000) would be needed in order to complete the 1:1 program district-wide and provide a device to all K-8 District 58 students.

We surveyed the 1:1 students, teachers and parents this winter and again this spring, and received very positive feedback on the program overall.

As part of our continuing goal of partnering with parents on the 1:1 journey, District 58 will offer a number of parent technology education opportunities over the next few months at Longfellow Center, 1435 Prairie Ave. in Downers Grove. All interested parents and community members are welcome. For the full list of upcoming parent technology education sessions, please visit www.dg58.org/parenttechsupport, or scan the QR code below.

Also this year we have fostered collaboration and connectivity among our staff by:

- Opening a 21st Century classroom at Longfellow Center to facilitate collaborative teaching and learning
- Developing a curriculum web app to put all curriculum resources at teachers' fingertips within a few clicks, fostering learning and growth for all students
- Providing a variety of staff development opportunities, including job-embedded support by our instructional coaches



Goals for the 1:1 initiative:

- Academic Achievement
- Access
- Authenticity
- Equity
- Choice
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Creativity
- Critical Thinking

- Moving to a new LRC system called Follett Destiny, which connects all of the District's LRCs and allows students to search for and check out books from any LRC at any time



District continues to explore possibility of full-day kindergarten

District 58's Kindergarten Team has been exploring the possibility of a full-day kindergarten program for District 58, and this fall they will discuss additional considerations — including personnel, resources and space in the elementary buildings — prior to making a formal recommendation to the Board of Education.

Kindergarten has changed significantly over the past 20 years, with much more ground to cover. Not only are students learning the three R's (reading, writing and arithmetic), as well as social skills and independence, they also are learning the three T's (Teamwork, Thinking Skills and Technology), as well as science and social studies. It has become increasingly difficult to accomplish all of this within the scope of a half-day program while also providing valuable time for students to play, create, process their learning, explore, make connections and further develop the all-important social and emotional skills that will support their future academic success.

During the District's current half-day program, in less than three hours, students move through a variety of activities including a class meeting, math, reading/writing/handwriting activities incorporating science and social studies, and other integrated activities such as Social-Emotional Learning, art, LRC time, P.E., music and recess.

With a full-day program, teachers would be able to move at a less-rushed pace, incorporate learning through play, facilitate longer and deeper class discussions and sharing opportunities, provide more time for art and fine motor skills, dig more deeply into the writing process, facilitate Social-Emotional Learning skills in a real and hands-on way by guiding student interactions, and provide longer and more frequent center times to allow for more in-depth questioning and processing. Ultimately, a full-day kindergarten program would provide students more time to process, digest and reflect on their learning, as well as unstructured time to create and play.

Implementing full-day kindergarten would provide the District's youngest learners with an additional 450 hours of instruction. The current proposal would be to put in place a cost-neutral program by allowing parents to opt in to full-day kindergarten and pay a fee to commensurate with the District's tuition-based preschool fee. Fee waivers would apply, and by law the District still would have to provide a half-day option.

Pumpkin math helped Indian Trail kindergartners work on a variety of skills, including measuring, estimating, sequencing and properties!



District 58 plans updates to Gifted Education Program

District 58's Gifted Education Committee has spent the past few years updating the design of the Gifted Education Program to better meet the needs of all students.

District 58's Gifted Education Program will provide quality differentiated instruction to appropriately challenge and meet the individual needs of K-8 students via instruction in their home school, in addition to a once-weekly pull-out program for identified 4th-6th grade students. This program will cover cross-curricular content in literature, math, STEM and historical perspectives. The program also includes instruction and skill development in social emotional learning skills and learning and innovation skills, which include critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity. In 7th and 8th grades, qualifying students have the opportunity to participate in our accelerated Math program, with Math A (7th grade

math and 60 percent of 8th grade math), Math B (40 percent 8th grade math and High School Math 1) and the Gifted English-Language Arts class.

Eligibility for District 58's Gifted Education Program will now be determined by a combination of achievement/trend data over time as measured by scores on the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test that is administered three times a year to all students, as well as classroom performance/behavior over time (high ability, task commitment, creativity) as measured by the Renzulli Scales for Rating the Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students.

The plan is to implement the refined Gifted Education Program for 2014-15, while providing a smooth transition for students and staff. For more information, visit www.dg58.org.

District 58 students continue high academic achievement

District 58 continues to be very proud of our students' academic achievements and growth. Once again this year, there was much to celebrate. Here are just a few highlights:

- District 58 students met or exceeded state standards as measured by the Illinois Standards Achievement Test at a rate of nearly 20 percent higher than the state average, and even greater than last year's 15 percent differential with the state.
- Growth was a new measure added to this year's state report card, and here again District 58 significantly outperformed the state average. This means that District 58 students are academically much stronger than the state average and are growing at a more rapid pace than the state average. It is very difficult to be both high-achieving and high growth. District 58 is currently accomplishing just that!
- Strong math and reading performances indicate that District 58 students are ready for the Common Core State Standards (see sidebar).
- On the Measures of Academic Progress assessment, administered to all students three times a year in reading, mathematics and language usage, District 58 students outperform the national mean in every area and grade level.
- More significantly, by 8th grade District 58 students outperform the national 11th grade mean in all areas on the MAP assessment.
- District 58 performed significantly better than the state as a result of the changes in cut scores and content of the ISAT overall. Throughout the state, district percentages for students meeting and exceeding standards dropped by 20 percent on average as a result of substantial renorming and new content. District 58's percentage of students meeting and exceeding standards were impacted by only about 15 percent. Despite the significant changes the Illinois State Board of Education made to ISAT cut scores and content, we are extremely proud to report that District 58 continues our strong tradition of strong academic achievement and growth. These achievements truly are a testament to the strong curriculum, excellent staff, hard-working students and strong community support in District 58.



Illinois is one of 45 states implementing new learning targets for K-12 students known as the Common Core Standards, which are intended to better prepare students for success in college and careers within our increasingly global economy.

District 58 has aligned its mathematics curriculum and its English Language Arts curriculum with the Common Core Standards, with improvements made each year. This school year the District's Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Committee began work on aligning the science curriculum with the Next Generation Science Standards, which are to be implemented in 2016-17. The committee has analyzed the standards and developed learning targets for earth science, life science and physical science, all of which are embedded in the District's curriculum web app. Next steps are to analyze standards and develop learning targets for engineering, coding and health.

Beginning in 2014-15, students will participate in the new state-mandated, Common Core-aligned PARCC assessment, which will replace the ISAT in Math and English Language Arts.



To view our district-wide and individual state report cards, visit www.dg58.org/domain/91.

District 58 SEL initiatives, helping students succeed

A District 58 education focuses on the whole child, and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) is an important component. District 58 continues to expand its supports and resources to help children develop the social and emotional skills they need to succeed. These efforts are being assisted by multi-year partnerships between District 58, CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning), and the DuPage Regional Office of Education to provide resources and training for staff.

During the past several years, all District 58 elementary schools have incorporated components of Responsive Classroom, a research-based program that helps schools support social-emotional development in children.



Additionally, all District 58 elementary schools have implemented the research-based Second Step curriculum, which provides lessons that help children develop skills for both academic and social success. The units include lessons to develop skills for learning, such as listening to learn, focused attention and self-talk; empathy; emotion management; friendship skills and problem solving. The program includes 22 to 28 lessons each year, in addition to daily classroom reinforcement activities and home links.

With Second Step, concepts and strategies that are introduced at the youngest grades are built upon and grow in complexity in the older grades. For example, students learn the emotion management techniques of Breathe, Count and Self-Talk in kindergarten, and in later years are shown more advanced breathing methods and complex self-talk techniques. In the last unit, students learn the STEP technique for problem-solving (see box).

Second Step is designed to promote school success, a sense of school connectedness among students, and a safe and respectful school climate. The self-regulation skills and social-emotional competencies taught also align with

the state Social-Emotional Learning standards, said Lester social worker Kristen Leonard. "A benefit I see of this program is that the kids feel really comfortable in their classroom and love having the discussion time to talk about real-life issues like friendship, recess and things going on at home," Leonard said.

At the middle school level, students receive instruction in the development of SEL skills and competencies during the Connections (7th grade) and SNAC (8th grade) exploratory classes.

District 58 schools also have implemented numerous other activities and programs to reinforce SEL concepts.

A sampling from across the district's elementary schools includes:

- School families, in which students are divided into families that include at least one student from each grade level and one staff member. During meetings, students participate in discussions and activities related to the SEL goals.
- Character recognition initiatives/incentives and awards assemblies
- Lunch and/or walks with the principal
- Guest readers
- Assemblies such as Bear Down on Bullies with Chicago Bears mascot Staley Da Bear
- School cheer
- Downers Grove Township speakers
- Star of the Week
- Bulletin board messages
- Student clubs that provide additional opportunities for positive interaction
- Student council fundraisers and donation drives
- Compliment boxes—students write a compliment for each student in the class each quarter and the teacher reads a few aloud each week. Students celebrate one another as their compliments are read.

At the middle school level, activities include:

- Student recognition programs such as Herrick's PRIDE program (Polite Respectful Individuals Doing Extra) and O'Neill's Senator of the Week
- Student clubs that foster relationship building and promote making a difference, such as O'Neill's STARR (Students Together Achieving Rewarding Relationships) Club and Herrick's HOPE (Helping Ordinary People Everyday) Club
- Celebrations during assemblies and all-school announcements
- Student council fundraisers and donation drives
- Rachel's Challenge
- Intramural sports

STEP technique for problem-solving

- S** — Say the problem without blame
- T** — Think of Solutions that are safe and respectful
- E** — Explore consequences (What would happen if...)
- P** — Pick the best solution



Lester first-grade students participate in a Morning Meeting discussion.



District 58 updating program to better meet the needs of English Language Learners

The number of students who receive English Language Learner (ELL) services in District 58 surpassed 200 four years ago, and has been growing at a rate of 15 to 20 percent each year since then. Currently more than 30 languages are spoken among District 58 students, and the District's English Language Learning/Bilingual Committee has developed a set of recommendations to support the needs of these students.

In 2012-13, the district introduced a Spanish bilingual resource class at El Sierra, in which instruction is supported in the student's first language as they transition to becoming proficient in English. Bilingual programs are required at schools where there are 20 or more students with the same first language who are eligible for Limited English Proficient services. Most ELL students in District 58 receive English as a Second Language support, in which instruction is provided in English with minimal translation.

To provide students with additional needed supports, the committee has recommended that the district launch a full-time Spanish bilingual primary class at El Sierra and look at offering enrollment to all kindergarten and first grade students from across the district for whom Spanish is their first language and who qualify for English language services. During the 2014-15 year, the committee also will study the possibility of launching additional bilingual cluster sites throughout the district.

Other recommendations include ensuring that all eligible students meet at least five periods a week with an ELL-certified teacher, that proficiency levels determine the level of ESL service received beyond the minimum five periods per week, that staff continue to work to design an ELL instructional program that will create consistency within the district, and that the district provide parent training and opportunities for community input, along with training for district staff, teachers and administrators.

Our staff and students give District 58 much to be proud of! Check out some of their wonderful accomplishments this year.

O'Neill Middle School science teacher **Dr. Meg Van Dyke** was one of just 10 teachers in Illinois to be named a **2014 Golden Apple Award** winner for excellence in teaching. Dr. Van Dyke's passion, commitment and dedication also led to her being named one of just three state-level finalists for this year's **Presidential Awards for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching** program, the nation's highest honor for teachers of mathematics and science.



Herrick Middle School eighth-grader **Nafisa Asad** earned the chance to compete at the **Scripps National Spelling Bee** in Washington, D.C., in May, having correctly spelled "balsam" to win the DuPage County spelling bee Feb. 26.



A total of 58 eighth-graders — 29 from **Herrick** and 29 from **O'Neill** — were honored at the annual District 58 Education Foundation Select 58 banquet for their citizenship and contributions to school and community. Visit www.dg58.org for the full list of 2013 honorees!



Hillcrest third-grader **Owen Murphy's** painting entitled Dad and Basketball was chosen at the state PTA Reflections competition to advance to the National level in the Special Artist, Visual Arts category. Murphy's piece will be on display at the National PTA Reflections art exhibit in Washington, D.C., after being presented during the Annual National PTA Convention in Texas in June. Also at the state level of Reflections, **Indian Trail** student **Megan Fogarty** received an honorable mention for her Intermediate Photography submission, and **Hillcrest** students **Gabriella DiDiana** and **Jada Ross** received special recognition for their Special Artist, Visual Arts submissions.



The **Herrick Middle School** seventh and eighth grade girls volleyball teams and seventh grade girls track team all won their conference championships!



O'Neill Middle School eighth-grader **Calvin Herion** won the Downers Grove American Legion Speech Contest, and placed second in the DuPage County contest!

District 58's central office is filled with works of art created by our wonderfully talented students. Use the ASC Art QR code at the right to check out some of this year's projects!



P.E. teacher **Pat Brown**, who is retiring this year after 26 years at Lester School, was presented with the **National PTA Life Achievement Award**. Through her commitment to Jump Rope for Heart, Lester has raised more than \$156,000 for the American Heart Association and remains the only school to devote a weekend day to the program.



Several **Herrick** and **O'Neill** students earned awards in the Downers Grove Junior Woman's Club's 2014 Junior High Art contest, which is open to all seventh and eighth grade students in Downers Grove. Best in Show was awarded to Herrick's **Brin Driscoll**. Visit www.dg58.org for the list of winners.



O'Neill Middle School custodian **Tom Moran** — and his favorite poem, Theodore Roethke's "The Waking" — were featured in a video series that launched during National Poetry Month in April. Moran submitted the poem to Favorite Poem Project: Chicago, run by Chicago's Poetry Foundation and the Favorite Poem Project, and he was one of five Chicago-area residents chosen for the series.

Fourteen students from District 58's middle school music ensembles were selected by audition to participate in the Illinois Music Educators Association's District 1 Music Festival in November. Visit www.dg58.org for the list.



The **Pierce Downer** PTA's Healthy Kids Committee was awarded the 2013-14 Healthy Students Award from the Illinois PTA. The Illinois



PTA's Healthy Students Award is designed to recognize PTAs who are helping to foster positive attitudes towards health, and promoting healthy lifestyles for their school and community.

Pierce Downer resource teacher **Megan Finnegan** and Indian Trail second grade teacher **Karen Ryan** were honored with 2014 **Outstanding Teacher Awards** by the Downers Grove Junior Woman's Club.



Five Destination ImagiNation teams comprised of District 58 students — three teams from **Pierce Downer**, one team from **Whittier** and one team from **Herrick Middle School** — were selected to compete at the state level in April. At the state competition, Pierce Downer's Techno-Finders and Battle Bunnies, as well as Herrick's Midnight Moon, all qualified to move on to the Global Finals in Tennessee!



About two dozen **O'Neill Middle School** students notched some impressive wins at science and engineering competitions this school year. This included teamwork awards at the **National Fluid Power Association's Fluid Challenge**, strength and aesthetics awards from bridge-building competitions, and a top-three finish in a race car challenge at Argonne National Laboratory. With educators trying to figure out how to interest more girls in pursuing careers in the STEM fields, it is worth noting that every single participant on O'Neill's science and engineering teams this year is female.



Nearly 300 District 58 staff, students and parents attended the **Education Foundation's Distinguished Service Awards** ceremony at Ashyana Banquets April 10, where nearly 50 staff members were recognized for going above and beyond in their service to students. Two award recipients were announced: **Highland** sixth grade teacher **Cheryl Varys** in the category of classroom teacher, and **Pierce Downer** resource teacher **Megan Finnegan** in the category of staff member working in a capacity



other than classroom teacher. Use the DSA QR code below to check out a video featuring all of this year's recipients!

On May 2 at its annual retirement dinner for staff, the Downers Grove Elementary Education Association recognized **Kingsley** fifth-grade teacher **Marla Gilbert** as its 2014 Teacher of the Year.



O'Neill Middle School's eighth-grade boys' volleyball team won the **conference championship!**

Hillcrest sixth-grader **Miles Teague's** original piano piece, "Inspiration - Part 1 and 2," earned first place for an instrumental solo in the middle school (6th-8th grade) division in the Illinois Music Education's All-State Music Composition Contest.



Hillcrest reading specialist **Christine LaPointe** was selected as the Top-Shelf Teacher for the Chicago Blackhawks' March 21 game versus the Carolina Hurricanes, having been nominated by a parent. She was awarded a \$100 gift card to www.donorschoose.org, and she chose to help fund a garden for a high-poverty school in Indianapolis.

In the statewide communications contest sponsored by the Illinois chapter of the National School Public Relations Association, District 58 earned an Award of Excellence for its website, www.dg58.org, as well as Awards of Merit for the 2012 Annual Report to the Community, the Inside 58 staff newsletter, and the Schools of 58 Handbook for Families.



Hillcrest fifth-grade teacher **Joanne Fiene**, who is retiring this year after 41 years as a classroom teacher, was presented with the **National PTA Life Achievement Award** June 5 for her decades of service and support as the school's PTA faculty representative and her tireless work in planning and volunteering for events.

Celebrate 58

District 58 continues conservative budgeting

The District 58 Board of Education got its first look in April at the tentative \$60.3 million spending plan for 2014-15. All decisions regarding District 58's budget were made with the district's mission first and foremost, which is, in partnership with parents and community, to challenge and engage each child by providing quality educational programs and support services in a safe, nurturing and child-centered environment in order to prepare all students to be lifelong learners and contributing members of a global society. "District 58 continues to spend responsibly while at the same time achieving excellent results for our students," said District 58 Superintendent Kari Cremascoli.

The district's 2013 Financial Profile placed District 58 within the Illinois State Board of Education's Financial

Recognition category, a designation it has achieved every year since the ISBE began using the Financial Profile to evaluate districts 12 years ago.

"Even in a difficult financial environment over the past several years, District 58 has maintained a high level of financial stability, while at the same time expanding staff and services and accomplishing approximately \$23 million on much-needed capital projects. We are now getting caught up on facilities work that had been put off for many years due to previous cutbacks," said Controller James Popernik. "Unfortunately, due to continued cuts to our expected revenues, particularly state funding and interest earnings, the district's financial stability and strength are beginning to weaken."

Staff has identified \$300,000 in proactive cost-cutting measures for 2014-15, focusing on areas for adjustment with as limited an impact as possible on student programs and services. "Even though next year is

going to be a good year from a financial perspective, we want to lessen the blow of an anticipated budget deficit for 2015-16 through responsible budgeting and spending," Popernik said.

District 58 will continue to carefully monitor factors affecting revenues, which unfortunately are a finite set of resources. The District also will remain conservative with expenditures and make choices as to how and where to allocate resources to best serve students and continue accomplishing the board's strategic goals.

The 2014-15 tentative budget includes approximately \$60.5 million in normal operating aggregate revenues and \$60.3 million in normal operating expenditures, not including the Medical Reserve Fund or the Life Safety Fund. At the end of the 2013-14 fiscal year, the state owed the District approximately \$700,000, and payment uncertainty from the state is again



factored into the district's 2014-15 budget.

Other revenue assumptions include:

- A slight increase in general state aid, and flat state categorical revenues
- A continuation of the state's financial difficulties
- Aggregate interest income remaining at minimal levels (\$90,000 or less)
- A \$25 instructional materials fee increase, the first such increase in a decade, and a transportation fee of \$25 per child to help offset rising costs and sharply diminished reimbursement from the state

Expenditure assumptions include:

- Completing \$3 million in Life Safety projects this summer (see next page)
- Relatively flat staffing levels
- A slight increase in total student enrollment
- Flat utilities costs as a result of energy conserving Life Safety projects and locked-in natural gas and electric rates for 2014-15
- Other expenditure costs such as purchased services, supplies and equipment to be held relatively constant
- Continuation of the 1:1 device initiative, supported by the current curriculum and technology budgets

What's next?

Tentative budget review and approval:

July 14

Budget goes on public display:

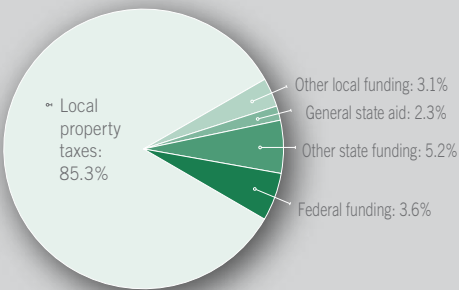
July 15

Public hearing, final budget adoption:

September 9

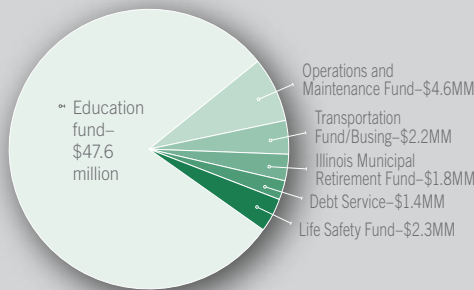
Where the money comes from:

Revenues by source



Where the money goes:

Expenditures



For more information about District 58's budget and finances, visit www.dg58.org.

In the photo above, a student dons goggles to begin a cow-eye dissection, which is part of the fifth grade science curriculum.

District 58 continues with planned facilities projects

District 58's ongoing facilities improvement plans continue to ensure safe, nurturing, child-centered environments for all students, while also protecting the community's investment in the District's buildings.

Capital projects completed during summer 2013 and targeted for completion in 2014 include much-needed asbestos abatement, carpet/tile replacement, asphalt projects, fire alarm and HVAC upgrades and security upgrades to buildings throughout the District, as well as a three-classroom addition. The District received two \$50,000 state grants to help pay for fire alarm upgrades at the middle schools. The capital projects are the result of years of careful planning and needs assessments, and have contributed substantially to addressing the highest priority needs identified within a comprehensive facilities study by Wight and Co. The District also has completed some minor renovations at the Administrative Service Center and Longfellow Center, and continues to explore options for the highest and best use of both buildings.

Use the Summer Construction QR Code at the right to check out a fun video spotlighting the projects completed last summer!



Projects planned for this summer include:

- Replace old carpet with new floor tile in classrooms at three schools
- Replace rooftop HVAC units at four schools
- Install new fire alarm systems at nine schools, and new kitchen fire doors at the two middle schools
- Install new boilers at Henry Puffer School
- Install new gym ventilation unit and three new classroom unit heaters, and tuckpoint two masonry walls at Whittier

Visit our Facilities Planning Page, <http://www.dg58.org/domain/734>, for a list of projects to be accomplished by school.

By the end of this summer, District 58 will have spent approximately \$23 million over the last seven years on its facilities, \$15 million of which came from Life Safety bond issues in 2010 and in 2013. The District has another \$5.4 million in projects planned for the next two to eight years to address additional priorities identified in the Wight and Co. study.

The District also accomplished phase one security upgrades last year. This included secure front entrances, a new swipe card system for staff and updated security/burglar alarm systems, accompanied by the District's ongoing commitment to continuous review of safety protocols and lockdown procedures. Building office staff were surveyed regarding the phase one security upgrades, and they indicated that the upgrades successfully balanced the need for increased building security with the desire to maintain warm, welcoming environments for students, staff and families. The District is currently reviewing and analyzing potential phase two projects.

Use the Security Upgrades QR Code at the right to check out a short video introducing our security upgrades to our families, staff and community last summer!



Community leaders get a look at facilities projects

In September Downers Grove community leaders joined District 58 board members, administrators and staff to celebrate the capital projects completed throughout the District last summer. In addition to reviewing the District's accomplishments, participants also toured Hillcrest and Pierce Downer schools.

"Each year, members of the District 58 Board of Education tour the schools on various evenings throughout the school year to experience first-hand the buildings and classrooms," said District 58 Superintendent Kari Cremascoli. "This year, in recognition of their support and partnership, we invited several of our community leaders to attend our first building tour of the year to celebrate with us the completion of our many capital improvement projects."

Among those in attendance were representatives from the Downers Grove Village Council, the Downers Grove Park District, local community organizations including the Grove Foundation, past and current members of the District's Financial Advisory Committee, District 58 staff, including the co-presidents of the Downers Grove Elementary Education Association, and the Hillcrest and Pierce Downer PTAs. Also in attendance were Sen. Christine Radogno (R-41st District) and a representative from the office of U.S. Rep. Bill Foster (D-IL 11th District).



Community leaders take a tour of Hillcrest School in September.

Community Partner Spotlight Community Outreach Concert spotlights D58, D99 partnership

Please use the QR code at left to view District 58 students played a very special part in this year's annual Community Outreach Concert presented by the Downers Grove North High School Fine Arts Department. The concert, which was performed twice in March for students from District 99's feeder schools, was themed around the connections between music and visual art.



Use the Concert QR Code to view the entire concert! The District 58/99 collaboration portion begins at around 50 minutes into the concert.

The grand finale featured the result of a months-long collaboration between District 58 and District 99, an animation project coordinated by District 58 visual arts teacher Jon Belonio. Downers North Fine Arts Chair Brayer Teague shared with Belonio the track to one of the songs they were working on: "The Cowboys," by John Williams. Belonio played the song for his students, and they used iPad apps such as Brushes and iPad Art Studio to create pieces of art that tied in with the theme.

Once the students had submitted their pieces via e-mail, Belonio wove many of them together into a short film that was projected on a large screen above the stage as the band performed "The Cowboys." Belonio introduced the piece and shared how District 58 students had contributed the artwork. The idea, he said, was to create something similar to Walt Disney's "Fantasia," where the animation accompanies the music.



Roadrunners Soccer Club, Rexnord collect school supplies and backpacks for students

The Roadrunners Soccer Club and Rexnord Industries, Inc. in Downers Grove both donated backpacks and sets of school supplies for our homeless and very needy students. Between the two groups, District 58 received more than 50 backpacks and sets of supplies!

Lions Club donation supports vision screenings in District 58

District 58's school nurses can now screen students for potential vision issues more quickly and easily thanks to the Downers Grove Lions Club, which recently donated \$2,500 to help cover the cost of two Optic 5000 Vision Screeners.

Last year two of District 58's school nurses, Susan Donahue and Ann Brinkman, spoke with the Lions Club about the screenings that take place in District 58 and showed Club members the machines that are used. At that time, District 58 had six machines that were shared among its 13 schools, which meant precious time was wasted as the machines were transported from one building to another and then had to be powered up and re-calibrated before they could be used for screenings.



Club member Angie Kleinfelder, a former teacher, was immediately struck by the memory of the single vision screening machine that had been shared among all of the schools in the district where she worked.

"The Lions Club was looking for additional ways to support and partner with the Downers Grove community, and this sounded like a perfect project for the Club to take on to benefit the schools," she said.

The Club donated the money in late March, and the two new machines were delivered not long after. One of the new machines will stay at Herrick Middle School, and the other at O'Neill Middle School.

"Middle school is the age at which more and more vision issues begin cropping up, and now we can quickly and efficiently screen students and refer them to an optician or ophthalmologist for further evaluation if needed," said O'Neill school nurse Susan Donahue. "We are so appreciative of the Lions Club's generous donations to support our students and schools."

Kingsley, Herrick celebrate anniversaries

Kingsley School celebrated its 50th anniversary this school year with a fall open house re-dedication, which included musical performances by Kingsley groups and a visit by members of the family of the school's namesake, James W. Kingsley. The PTA also asked



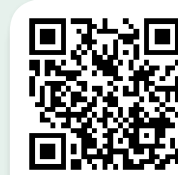
former Kingsley students to write letters of appreciation to teachers this spring, in conjunction with Teacher Appreciation Week. Kingsley opened its doors in 1963.

Meanwhile, November 21 marked the 60th day of Herrick's 60th year. Students and staff played party games all week during lunch, including Duck Pond and Spartan Buckets. On November 21, eight brave staff members volunteered to be HMS celebrities and take a pie in the face. Each pie cost \$1, and a total of \$610.45 was raised for the Illinois Association for Junior High Student Councils State Service Project Camp Counts for Kids.

District 58 Education Foundation enjoys highly successful year

Books for classroom libraries, IdeaPaint, WhisperPhones for fluency improvement, physical activity monitors, books and materials for a second grade Genius Hour, and a half-sized bass for the instrumental music program were among the 16 grant requests totaling \$25,000 that were funded by the District 58 Education Foundation for 2013-14.

Use the Foundation Grants QR Code at the right to check out a video spotlighting this year's grants!



The District 58 Education Foundation is an independent non-profit corporation, established in 2002 to obtain and distribute financial and other resources for the enhancement of education programs at the 13 schools of Downers Grove Grade School District 58. Since its inception, the Foundation has brought in nearly \$400,000 for District 58 schools, which it has donated back primarily in the form of classroom and building grants for technology innovation, curriculum enrichment and staff development.

The Foundation also sponsors the Select 58 awards honoring eighth graders for service to their school and community; Distinguished Service Awards for staff; Sneak Preview for incoming seventh graders; and the annual new teacher welcome luncheon. This year the Foundation also sponsored a digital citizenship parent night in February for sixth through eighth grade parents on creating a positive digital culture, and provided financial support for a staff-led collaboration day.



The Foundation raises money for its programs through donations from staff, parents, businesses and community members, as well as through major community fundraisers. This year, the organization hosted an evening with Big Head Todd, in partnership with the Tivoli Theatre, which raised more than \$25,000 for the Foundation's programs.

For more information on the District 58 Education Foundation, including its programs and how to make a donation or get involved, please visit www.58foundation.org.



One Foundation grant funded Genius Hour, a partnership of four second-grade classrooms in District 58 in which students worked together to "learn by doing." Genius Hour, also referred to as Passion Time or 20 percent time, allowed students to explore and research a wide variety of topics of their choice, then share their learning via writing, slide shows, podcasts, and more.

Foundation launches Green Apple Recognition Program

Now you can honor a special teacher or staff member and help the Education Foundation of Downers Grove District 58 at the same time through the new Green Apple Teacher/Staff Recognition Program! With each donation you make, a specially designed Green Apple card will be sent to the teacher or staff member you are honoring, with a special message from you. Thanks to Lemon Tree Grocer for designing the logo for this new program.

Your Green Apple Recognition donation comes directly back to the students and staff in

District 58 through our teacher grant program, which supports innovative programs in District 58 classrooms. To honor a teacher with a Green Apple Recognition, visit www.58foundation.org/greenapplerecognition.

All donations are tax-deductible. Thank you for supporting the District 58 Education Foundation!

On May 15, Foundation and District representatives surprised the first three Green Apple recipients — including Hillcrest social worker Jessica Greene — with their card and a balloon bouquet.



58 Doing Good shines a spotlight on District 58 service projects

District 58 students and staff participate in a wide variety of service projects throughout the year, which not only make a big difference for those on the receiving end but also cultivate a spirit of giving, civic responsibility, generosity and compassion in the next generation of leaders. Visit www.dg58.org/58-doing-good to read more about these and many other projects from the 2013-14 school year.

District 58 students donate to tornado victims

When disaster struck central Illinois last fall in the form of a devastating tornado, District 58 students and staff sprang into action, participating in a variety of collection drives and fundraisers to help the tornado victims. These included donating money to wear hats and jeans in school and bringing in items to give to the "fill the bus" event in the Randall Park neighborhood.

District 58 schools support rare disease awareness

Several District 58 schools participated in awareness and fundraising activities related to Rare Disease Day 2014, an event created by the Global Genes Project. The Global Genes Project is one of the leading rare and genetic disease patient advocacy organizations in the world. This included an afternoon celebration at Kingsley called Dance Off Disease and "jeans for genes" activities at Whittier and Lester.

58 Doing Good

District 58 schools donate for FISH van

A number of District 58 schools, including Puffer, El Sierra, Pierce Downer, O'Neill and Whittier, signed on to help the FISH food pantry in Downers Grove raise funds to purchase a new cargo van for food pickups and deliveries.

Other service projects featured on 58 Doing Good this year included:

- Belle Aire students serve as guest ringers for Salvation Army
- El Sierra fifth grade packs meals for Feed My Starving Children
- Fairmount families donate 3,500 items to shelter
- Henry Puffer makes big donation to Ronald McDonald House
- Hillcrest donates nearly \$8,000 to Children's Neuroblastoma Cancer Foundation
- Highland "school families" make tie blankets to donate to hospital

- Indian Trail's RL4C making a difference for families
- Kingsley raises funds for Heavenly Hats
- Lester collects warm clothing, toys, food items for those in need
- Pierce Downer collects toys, books for Noah's Hope
- Whittier, Herrick students play "Santa" for Toys for Tots
- O'Neill Silver Cluster meets 179 percent of food drive goal
- Hillcrest and Kingsley students and O'Neill staff have their heads shaved at St. Baldrick's events



New administrative team members

Jessica Stewart, Assistant Superintendent for Special Services

Stewart comes to District 58 from DeKalb Community Unit School District 428, where she has spent the past seven years as a district administrator, most recently as Director of Student Services. Prior to her role as an administrator in District 428, Stewart taught special education students at the middle school level for eight years. She earned master's degrees in educational administration and in learning disabilities from Northern Illinois University, and bachelor's degrees in learning disabilities and in elementary education from Monmouth College.



James Eichmiller, Director of Innovative Technology and Learning

Eichmiller comes to District 58 from Forest Park School District 91, where he served as Director of Instructional Technology. A Google Certified Trainer and Google Certified Teacher, Eichmiller began his career in education as a mathematics teacher. Eichmiller earned his master's degree in instructional technology from East Carolina University in Greenville, N.C., and his bachelor's degree in mathematics from Eastern Illinois University.



Amy Gray, Herrick Assistant Principal

Gray comes to Herrick from Stratford Middle School in District 93 where she has served as the assistant principal for the past two years. Prior to that Amy taught social studies and language arts at Simmons Middle School in District 131.



Melissa Capizzi, Pierce Downer/Hillcrest Assistant Principal

Capizzi is finishing her third year as an assistant principal in Mount Prospect, and prior to that she was a resource teacher in Evanston for nine years. She spent her first year teaching second grade in Chicago Public Schools.



Administrative team changes



Brent Borchelt, Belle Aire Principal

Brent Borchelt, who had served as assistant principal at Pierce Downer and Hillcrest, was appointed last summer to serve as principal of Belle Aire School.



Matt Neustadt, Herrick Principal

Matt Neustadt, who has served as assistant principal at Herrick for three years, will take over as principal there this fall. Neustadt, a lifelong Downers Grove resident, attended Herrick as a child.

Jason Lynde, El Sierra Principal

Jason Lynde, who has served as principal of Herrick Middle School for five years, will take the helm at El Sierra School this fall. He will replace Principal Lucille Carney, who is retiring at the end of this school year after nine years of service.



District 58 honors retirees

District 58 bid farewell to more than two dozen staff members at the end of the 2013-14 school year with nearly **600 years** of combined service to the District and its students. For the full list of 2013-14 retirees, visit www.dg58.org.





1860 63rd Street
Downers Grove, IL 60516
www.dg58.org | 630.719.5800

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
DOWNERS GROVE IL
PERMIT NO. 19

The Schools of District 58

Belle Aire School

3935 Belle Aire Lane
Principal: Brent Borchelt

El Sierra School

6835 Fairmount Avenue
Principal: Jason Lynde

Fairmount School

6036 Blodgett Avenue
Principal: Anthony Coglianese

Henry Puffer School

2220 Haddow Avenue
Principal: Todd McDaniel

Herrick Middle School

4435 Middaugh Avenue
Principal: Matt Neustadt

Highland School

3935 Highland Avenue
Principal: Judy Kmak, Ed.D.

Hillcrest School

1435 Jefferson Avenue
Principal: Paula Thomas

Indian Trail School

6235 Stonewall Avenue
Principal: Robin Bruebach

Kingsley School

6509 Powell Street
Principal: Mark Stange

Lester School

236 Indianapolis Avenue
Principal: Carin Novak

O'Neill Middle School

635 59th Street
Principal: Matt Durbala

Pierce Downer School

1436 Grant Street
Principal: Justin Sisul



Whittier School

536 Hill Street
Principal: Michael Krugman

To visit any of our school websites, go to www.dg58.org and hover over the Schools drop-down menu!

District 58's research-based, blended Grove Children's Preschool program is housed at Indian Trail and Henry Puffer. For more information, visit www.dg58.org/preschool.

District 58 is proud to be part of Forbes Top 10

Downers Grove was ranked second on a list of Top 10 Best Cities for Kids in the entire country as compiled by Livability.com! According to the site, Downers Grove, which was the only Illinois town to make the list, "not only offers great schools, playgrounds and low crime rates, it also gives children opportunities to live healthy lifestyles in a multitude of activities with other kids." Downers Grove also was recently named one of the Top 10 Friendliest Towns in America by Forbes Magazine.



"We are proud to be a vital part of such a wonderful community," said District 58 Superintendent Dr. Kari Cremascoli.

We hope you find this annual publication to be informative and useful, and we welcome any feedback you might have. If you have a question or a comment about this or any other publication, or about District 58 or any of its programs, policies or procedures, please do not hesitate to contact our Office of Communications at communications@dg58.org.